



Call for Experts & Young Researchers

CAREER LEAD is a European research network on Career Guidance in general schools. The network was established to promote the exchange and cooperation of researchers in European countries and beyond. The set-up phase of the network is supported by the European Union as part of the Erasmus+ project “European Scientific Network for Career Learning and Education – CAREER LEAD”.

Thematic working groups have been established within the project:

- Career Guidance and Digitalization
- Career Guidance and Heterogeneity
- Career Guidance and Sustainability



Career Guidance in a Digital World

The perspective considers the impact digitalization has on career guidance. Three different perspectives are taken into account: First, the changing world of work and its implications on career guidance. Second, the influences of media on career development and occupational aspirations. Third, the pedagogical concepts that help to guide young people in a digital world and the digital opportunities that help to interact with students at an individual level.

Digitalisation processes result in significant changes in work and career. This dynamic evolution includes the extinction and emergence of new professions. Career guidance research needs to take the resulting challenges and opportunities into account.

The Career Guidance and Digitalization working group focuses on the role of digitalization in career guidance from three perspectives: The first perspective addresses the influence of digitalization and the associated technological change on the transformation of career-related opportunities. The second approach looks at the impact digitalization and mass media have on career development. The third angle focuses on how digitalization can be used to foster career guidance.

Careers today must be viewed in the context of a working world that is characterized by change: robotics, automation, artificial intelligence, quantum computers and other technologies lead to a dynamic of professional opportunities. Job profiles are changing, disappearing, or being created from scratch in the course of digitalization processes (Hartung, 2019).

From the perspective of media effects research, we observe strong relationships between media exposure and career development. This for instance accounts for career aspirations (Gehrau et al., 2016), career expectations (Kinast et al., 2023) and career decisions (Terry & Peck, 2020). All studies published in recent years provide evidence of links between media exposure and career development. Furthermore, strong indicators of potential effects of cultivation, social learning and wishful identification are revealed.



When discussing the usability of digital tools, we focus on the Integrated Career Guidance Model by Bakke and Hooley (2023). The model's main idea is to connect digital technologies and pedagogical aims to support learners in their career development. The model can be considered a paradigm shift, offering an initial framework that combines different digital and non-digital options, approaches and tools.

Research Gap: In the context of digitalization, changes in the world of work and careers are associated with both risks and opportunities, for which young people must be prepared in the course of career guidance. It is necessary to emphasize these aspects more strongly in the promotion of career choice competence. Against this background, questions arise as to how not only knowledge-related aspects, e.g. in the context of opening new job profiles, but also motivational dimensions can be addressed. One example of this is dealing with uncertainty due to the dynamics of change.

In terms of possible media effects, almost the entire research in the field is cross-sectional. This means that we don't know the causal direction of the observable links. For instance, we don't know whether media exposure leads to certain career interests or if initial career interests lead to corresponding media usage in the first place. It is of course also possible that these variables are interdependent. To answer the question of causality, initial longitudinal research is necessary.

When it comes to the utilization of digital resources and tools to promote career development, future research needs to explore how comfortable practitioners are with paradigm change, how different types of students, with different levels of career competencies and digital literacy, respond to the Integrated Career Guidance approach.

Career guidance in a heterogeneous world

The Career Guidance and Heterogeneity working group focuses on the need for individual support in heterogeneous learning groups. It recognises and respects the diversity students to support each individual in the best possible way.

The heterogeneity of learning groups is increasing worldwide due to a variety of factors such as, but not limited to, migration experiences, gender, different initial language requirements, and potential special educational support needs, taking into account intersectionality. As a result, young people's information, orientation, and reflection processes in the decision-making process are becoming more diverse.

As a result, support offers need to be more individualised and tailored to the specific needs of each student. In order to do this, the individual development needs of each young person must first be diagnosed.

There is a need to review and extend current Career Guidance programmes for different target groups.



Possible [research desiderata](#) include:

- The current status of dealing with heterogeneous learning groups in the context of schools and Career Guidance in different countries (possible research approaches include participatory research, belief studies, exploratory dialogues).
- The necessary skills and qualifications of educational staff (multidisciplinary teams).
- The development and evaluation of Career Guidance programmes that consider individual needs and support requirements.
- The development and evaluation of diagnostic tools to assess individual prerequisites, but also teaching materials, in the context of Career Guidance.
- Research on the importance of intersectionality in the context of Career Guidance.
- Development and evaluation of (digital) support measures for an individualised Career Guidance, using concepts such as e.g. universal design for learning, adaptive learning, language-sensitive subject teaching, and supported communication.

Career guidance in a sustainable world

As the Career Guidance and Sustainability working group we talk about green guidance, green skills, sustainable careers and the aspect of social justice. A sustainable career is one that not only provides personal wellbeing and financial stability but also contributes to the wellbeing of the planet and society as a whole. Labour market information are important to connect personal sustainability attitudes with professions and jobs connected e.g. to energy transition.

The term "Green Guidance" is a relatively new concept; similar visions and ideas that characterise the term today can be found, for example, in Frank Parson's work at the end of the 19th century (Mutualismus, 1894) and the beginning of the 20th century. According to Bliem et al (2023), "Green Guidance" is a counselling approach that takes into account the impact of educational and career choices on the environment and raises awareness on this topic. Košťálová (2021, p. 39) explains the term "Green Counselling" as support that helps individuals to "find their own way and their own reasons to stand up for nature and the environment". Cedefop (2022) defines green skills as "the knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes needed to live in, develop and support a sustainable and resource-efficient society."

Thus, sustainability and career guidance is a broad field between green guidance and green skills and opens up a wide field for [research gaps and research interests](#). For example:

- How can "Green Guidance" be introduced into mainstream society as a sustainable approach to solving the global problems caused by limitless growth?
- To what extent do sustainability considerations and environmental issues determine the educational and career choices of pupils at the end of their school career?
- How can sustainability considerations be increased in the educational and career choices of young people? What methods/activities are suitable?
- How can "Green Skills" best be integrated into education to ensure that the workforce of tomorrow is equipped with the necessary skills?



- What impact do “Green Skills“ have on the employability and career development of workers?
- How can “Green Skills“ and green jobs help to reduce social inequalities and promote an inclusive green economy?

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Researchers with expertise in digitalization, heterogeneity or sustainability, as well as Career Guidance and young field researchers are being sought to contribute to the working group. They are also invited to participate in the online conference titled 'Career Guidance in Schools under European and International Perspectives' on 27th and 28th of June 2024. Further information can be found at <https://career-lead.eu/>.